

CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-18 (Canceled).

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): A sheet material comprising absorptive polymer particles comprising one or more polymers comprising polymerized units of one or more monoethylenically unsaturated monomers having at least one acid group,

wherein the surface of the absorptive polymer particles is secondary surface cross-linked, and

wherein the polymer is at least partially neutralized and has one or more cyclodextrins, cyclodextrin derivatives, or both cyclodextrins and cyclodextrin derivatives, bonded covalently thereto, bonded ionically thereto, incorporated therein or a combination thereof.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, wherein the polymer comprises from 0.01 to 50 wt.% of at least one of the cyclodextrins, cyclodextrin derivatives or mixture thereof, based on the total weight of the polymer.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, wherein at most 85 wt.% of the cyclodextrins or cyclodextrin derivatives are extractable from the polymer with water.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 20, wherein at most 85 wt.% of the cyclodextrins or cyclodextrin derivatives are extractable from the polymer with water.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 21, wherein at most 60 wt.% of the cyclodextrins or cyclodextrin derivatives are extractable from the polymer with water.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, wherein the polymer further comprises up to 40 wt.% of one or more further monoethylenically unsaturated monomers different from the monoethylenically unsaturated monomers having an acid group relative to the polymer.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, wherein the polymer comprises from 0.05 to 3 wt.% of one or more polymerized units of a cross-linking monomer relative to the polymer.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, comprising up to 30 wt.% of at least one of a copolymerized or graft polymerized water soluble, natural or synthetic polymer relative to the polymer.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, wherein the polymer particles are surface cross-linked with from 0.1 to 10 wt.% of one or more cross-linking components relative to the polymer.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, wherein the polymer comprises at least one of an α -cyclodextrin, a β -cyclodextrin, a γ -cyclodextrin, or a derivative thereof.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, wherein the polymer has a sieve fraction with a particle size in the range of from 100 to 1000 μm .

Claim 30 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, wherein the polymer particles are present on the surface of the sheet.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): A diaper comprising the sheet material according to Claim 19.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): An incontinence article comprising the sheet material according to Claim 19.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): A method comprising contacting a liquid with the sheet material according to Claim 19 to absorb the liquid and reduce the odor of the liquid.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 33, wherein the liquid is a human bodily fluid.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in Claim 33, wherein the sheet material is a packaging unit.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in Claim 33, wherein the sheet material is a diaper.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented): The sheet material according to Claim 19, wherein the absorptive polymer particles are obtained by first polymerizing to form a polymer then subsequently crosslinking the surface of the polymer.

Claim 38 (New): Polymers based on crosslinked monomers bearing partially neutralized acid groups, the surface of which has been surface crosslinked following polymerization, obtained by a process wherein

- an aqueous solution containing partially neutralized acrylic acid is converted to a gel in the presence of crosslinkers and optional polymer additives;
- the gel is subsequently dried, milled and screened to the desired particle size;
- the polymer is surface cross-linked before or after the gel has been dried

wherein cyclodextrines or derivatives thereof as a substance or dissolved in a solvent

- are added directly to the aqueous monomer solution prior to the polymerization thereof;
- are applied to a non-dried polymer gel;
- are added onto the crushed and dried absorbent material during surface crosslinking of the polymer product;
- are applied onto the crushed, already surface crosslinked polymer product.

Claim 39 (New): A sheet material comprising the polymer of claim 38.

Claim 40 (New): The sheet according to claim 39, wherein the sheet material is a diaper.

Claim 41 (New): A polymer comprising polymerized units of one or more monomers having at least partially neutralized acid groups, wherein the polymer is a crosslinked polymer obtained by

polymerizing an aqueous solution comprising at least partially neutralized acrylic acid and one or more crosslinkers, to form a gel,

drying the gel,

milling and screening the dried gel,

adding one or more cyclodextrins or derivatives thereof as a solid or as a solution in a solvent, and

surface crosslinking the gel.

Claim 42 (New): The polymer of Claim 41, wherein the surface crosslinking is carried out before the drying.

Claim 43 (New): The polymer of Claim 41, wherein the surface crosslinking is carried out after the drying.

Claim 44 (New): The polymer of Claim 41, wherein the cyclodextrins or derivatives thereof are added to the aqueous solution prior to the polymerizing.

Claim 45 (New): The polymer of Claim 41, wherein the cyclodextrins or derivatives thereof are added to the polymer gel before the drying.

Claim 46 (New): The polymer of Claim 41, wherein the cyclodextrins or derivatives thereof are added to the dried, milled and screened gel during crosslinking.

Claim 47 (New): The polymer of Claim 41, wherein the cyclodextrins or derivatives thereof are added to the dried, milled and screened gel after crosslinking.

Claim 48 (New): A sheet material comprising the polymer of Claim 41.

Claim 49 (New): The sheet according to Claim 41, wherein the sheet material is a diaper.

BASIS FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claims 19-49 are active in the present application. Claims 19-37 are currently allowed, Claims 1-18 are canceled claims. Claims 38-49 are new claims. Support for new Claims 38 and 41 is found at page 4, last paragraph; page 11, last paragraph; page 10, last paragraph; page 12, third paragraph; page 12, last paragraph; page 13, first paragraph; page 13, third paragraph; and page 13, fourth paragraph. No new matter is believed to have been added by this amendment.

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Reply to the Notice of Allowance of June 7, 2004

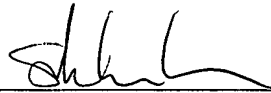
REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants thank Examiner Acquah for the indication in the Notice of Allowance of June 7, 2004 that Claims 19-37 are allowed. Applicants submit herewith a Request for Continued Examination, an Information Disclosure Statement and new Claims.

Applicants submit that Claims 19-37 remain patentable. Applicants request an examination on the merits of new Claims 38-49 and an indication of their allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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